

**Appln No. 10/712,224**  
**Amdt date January 24, 2007**  
**Reply to Office action of December 15, 2006**

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Claims 1-22 and 24-26 are pending in this application. Claim 23 has been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 17, 24, and 26 are independent. Claim 24 has been written into independent form in the present claim amendment. Claim 26 has been amended only to remove reference numerals. No new matter has been added. This is a Response to the Office action dated December 15, 2006, wherein the Examiner indicated that claims 1-22 and 26 are allowable, claim 23 is rejected, and claims 24 and 25 are objected as depending from a rejected claim. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough examination of the application and also for indicating the allowance or allowability of claims 1-22 and 24-26.

Although Applicant does not acquiesce to the particular rejection of claim 23, Applicant has cancelled claim 23 and rewritten claim 24 into independent form in order to place the application in condition for allowance. Claims 25 depends from claim 24. Thus, claims 24 and 25 no longer depend from a rejected base claim. Applicant submits that claim 26 was never limited in any manner to any of the elements corresponding to the reference numerals initially incorporated therein, and should not be construed as such. Instead, claim 26 should be construed in accordance with prevailing claim construction rules to cover full equivalents as well.

Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance and early notice thereof is respectfully solicited. If there are any remaining issues that can be addressed over the telephone, the Examiner is cordially invited to call Applicant's attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,  
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